

## DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 324 278

SP 032 568

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TITLE New Jersey's Alternate Route to Teacher Certification.  
PUB DATE 16 Apr 90  
NOTE 34p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Boston, MA, April 17-20, 1990).  
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)  
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.  
DESCRIPTORS \*Alternative Teacher Certification; \*Board of Education Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; \*Political Power; \*Politics of Education; Professional Recognition; \*State Action; Teacher Certification; Teacher Education Programs  
IDENTIFIERS \*New Jersey

## ABSTRACT

This paper recounts the controversy surrounding the development and implementation of alternate route teacher certification in New Jersey. The opposing forces in the debate were the governor and the commissioner of education versus education professors and teacher unions. The debate is presented as an uneven conflict in which the forces of the state government, embodied in the political power of the governor, outweighed the influence of the educators. The pros and the cons of each side of the debate are outlined. Some concerns that have been expressed about the alternate route certification program are: insufficient supervision and evaluation of teachers, its extensive use for staffing private schools, and the stress teachers experience teaching in difficult situations while they are meeting the requirements for academic seminar participation. The alternate route may face an uncertain future because of a change in the state's administration; a new governor and commissioner are reviewing the program with some skepticism and different political priorities. Some positive aspects of the alternate route are pointed out. It is a mechanism for staffing urban schools, and it has brought some capable and mature people into teaching. Twenty-nine references are listed. (JD)

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NEW JERSEY'S ALTERNATE ROUTE TO  
TEACHER CERTIFICATION

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Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educa-  
tional Research Association, Boston, April 16, 1990.

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### Announcement and Reaction

In September 1983, New Jersey Governor Tom Kean and Education Commissioner Saul Cooperman announced that teachers should no longer have to be prepared through college education programs. People who wanted to be teachers should have an "alternate route."

The alternate route which Kean and Cooperman proposed was:

1. Possess a bachelor's degree with at least a minor in the subject to be taught, with any liberal arts minor being acceptable for elementary and special education teachers.
2. Pass a test of content mastery in the subject to be taught or a general knowledge test for elementary and special education teaching.<sup>1</sup>
3. Complete a provisional year as a regularly salaried teacher. The provisional year would be preceded by a five-day orientation to the school and to all the important information about teaching. (Cooperman, Webb, and Klagholz, 1983)

This proposal was offensive to the education professors in New Jersey for two reasons. First, they were excluded, both in the development stage of which they had been kept unaware<sup>2</sup> and in the implementation stage. Second, the proposal said that a prospective teacher could pick up all the essential professional knowledge in a few days.

The New Jersey branches of the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association also found the proposal offensive. Governor Kean and Commissioner Cooperman had said that the professional knowledge base for teaching was sparse enough to be acquired in a few days. Their implication that teaching was not a very professional career did not bode well for improvements in the status of the profession. However, at the same time that he seemed to be denigrating the teaching profession, Governor Kean did get an increase in the starting salary for teachers to \$18,500.

#### Political Maneuvers

The opposing forces in the alternate route debate became Kean and Cooperman versus education professors and teacher unions. Kean and Cooperman were well known individuals; the professors and unions were amorphous assemblages. Kean and Cooperman were new on the state scene and fresh with promise; the professors and unions had been around forever. Kean and Cooperman embodied hope for something better; the professors and unions were cast as opponents of reform. Kean and Cooperman said they had only the public interest in mind; the professors and unions had an obvious self-interest at stake as well. Kean and Cooperman had a case which could be presented in simple terms; the professors and unions had to show that those terms were simplistic, but there was no simple way to do it.

Kean and Cooperman had the public impulse to change that had been quickened by the National Commission for Excellence in Education; the professors and unions had journal critiques of A Nation at Risk.

Commissioner Cooperman went throughout New Jersey making the case for the alternate route. He used a three-word mantra: competition, economical, reform. The alternate route would be competition for the college education programs. Competition would cause everyone to try harder and do better. The alternate route would be much more economical than the college programs because it would be much less prolonged. It would attract people into teaching by putting them on the payroll immediately instead of charging them tuition and making them take numerous education courses of dubious value. This would also make it less costly for the state. And the alternate route would reform New Jersey's emergency certification procedure by insuring that even teachers hired on an emergency basis got some formal preparation.

The education professors replied that the alternate route would be far too fast and easy, but they had difficulty demonstrating the necessity for something longer and harder. Their claim to higher quality programs was countered by Cooperman's claim to higher quality entrants. The commissioner touted the outstanding people who were waiting to get into the alternate route and made no mention of the ones who were less than outstanding. Moreover, the

professors had to contend with research which showed that students in college education programs had low Scholastic Achievement Test scores compared to students in other college programs. (Weaver, 1979) That the research results were false for many of the New Jersey college programs was a message that did not change the general perception.

The debate was carried on in the media, with each side trying to get coverage of its position. New Jersey's largest circulation newspaper, The Newark Star-Ledger, had backed Tom Kean for governor and was friendly to his administration. In May of 1983, several months before the announcement of the alternate route proposal, the Star-Ledger carried a Sunday front-page story, with photos, of an accomplished young woman who wanted to be a teacher but had no intention of subjecting herself to the required education courses. The story was sympathetic to her and did not suggest that any of the required education courses might be justified. (Braun, May 29, 1983, p. 39) After the alternate route proposal was made public, the Star-Ledger regularly gave front-page coverage to Cooperman's pronouncements on it. The education editor of the paper, in his twice-weekly editorial column, shifted between support for the alternate route and attacks on the college education programs.

The professors and unions had been caught off guard and put on the defensive by the governor and commissioner, but they had access to the state legislature, one of whose

members was an education professor. The New Jersey Education Association (an NEA affiliate) was the largest union in the state, and it had money plus votes. With this political power, it could command the attention of the legislature on any issue. Soon committees of the legislature were drafting bills that would scuttle the alternate route.

At committee hearings, Cooperman gave answers that were contradictory and confusing. He assuaged one set of critics by saying that the alternate route would enlist only a handful of participants so there was no cause for alarm. To other critics who worried that the alternate route would benefit only a few people at high political expense, the commissioner said it had the potential to prepare thousands of teachers. As it turned out, no bills on the alternate route were brought to a vote in the legislature because the governor promised to veto them and the commissioner promised to appoint expert committees to refine the proposal.

For the next three months, and before the expert committees were convened, there were sporadic announcements that another prominent person or organization had decided to endorse the idea of an alternate route. The chancellor of higher education for New Jersey, the New Jersey School Boards Association, and the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association all got on board. The organizational endorsements were made by the leadership and it was never known how much these reflected member

sentiment, but member grumbling was heard. In the case of the state School Boards Association, officers complained that the executive director had not consulted with them before he committed the organization. With the Principals and Supervisors Association, two of its county chapters announced opposition to the endorsement. Press coverage of the demurrers was imperceptible.

The chancellor's endorsement was given an interesting interpretation in a letter written much later by Commissioner Cooperman. The chancellor had angered Cooperman, who then accused the chancellor of endorsing the alternate route because he wanted to reduce the size of college education programs and capture faculty lines for the liberal arts programs. (Cooperman, September 20, 1984) The chancellor's staff then acknowledged that cutting back on the faculty lines in the college education programs had been a goal of the chancellor. (Braun, October 2, 1984)

This may have been one of the reasons that college presidents began weighing in with their endorsements. The presidents had an additional inducement. They knew that Cooperman intended to create an Academy for the Advancement of Teaching and Management, and it was expected that the academy would be based at a college. (The academy was established eventually and is still operating - at a non-college site.) The president of Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, may have had a third inducement. He announced his support of the alternate route at a morning

press conference(Braun, January 13, 1984), and that afternoon Governor Kean announced a special \$3 million appropriation to upgrade the training facilities for Rutgers' football team.(Remington, 1984)

The most prominent person to endorse New Jersey's alternate route proposal was the President of the United States. In a speech on December 9, 1983, Ronald Reagan said:

In New Jersey, Governor Tom Kean has a proposal that deserves wide support. Under his plan, the New Jersey Board of Education would allow successful mathematicians, scientists, linguists, and journalists to pass a competency test in their subjects, then go into the classroom as paid teaching interns. If they performed well, they would be issued permanent teaching certificates. ("President Praises State Licensing Plan," 1983)

The most legally significant endorsement came from the State Board of Education. A few days after Reagan's endorsement, the state board ruled that New Jersey would have an alternate route to teaching, details to be worked out later.

#### Two Expert Committees

The first of Cooperman's expert committees was chaired by Ernest Boyer, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and came to be known as the Boyer Panel. Other members of the panel were David Berliner, an educational psychologist at the University of Arizona; Frank Brown, dean of education at the University of North Carolina; Edgar Epps, Marshall Field Professor of Urban Education at the University of Chicago; C. Emily Feistritzer, director of the National Center for Education Information; Jay Gottlieb, an educational psychologist at New York University; Lawrence Lezotte of the Administration and Curriculum Department at Michigan State University; Archie Lapointe, executive director of the National Assessment Office at Educational Testing Service; Kathryn Maddox, director of the Multi-Institutional Teacher Education Center for the Kanawha County (West Virginia) Schools; and Barak Rosenshine, an educational psychologist at the University of Illinois.

Cooperman's main charge to the Boyer Panel was to answer the question: What is essential for beginning teachers to know about the profession? Since none of the panelists was a teaching field specialist, for example, a science educator, the panel was predicted to recommend a generic knowledge base, and it did. It recommended that a beginning teacher know about curriculum development, teaching strategies, materials selection, human development, assessment of pupils, classroom management, and the

sociology of schooling. These recommendations were the result of a two-day meeting and were contained in a 14-page report. (Boyer, 1984) The Boyer "topics" were adopted by Cooperman as the mandatory topics for all teacher education programs in New Jersey.

Before the Boyer Panel report was issued, some New Jersey education deans met with Boyer at the annual conference of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. The meeting was arranged by David Imig of the AACTE. (The AACTE had earlier given \$5,000 to the New Jersey education deans to assist them in exposing and combatting weaknesses in the alternate route.) The deans were worried that the Boyer panelists were being co-opted by Tom Kean and Saul Cooperman, and would have their names invoked in support of the alternate route in whatever form it finally took. Cooperman did extract from the panelists a promise that they would not comment on the final product, and their silence was construed as tacit support.<sup>3</sup>

The second of Cooperman's expert committees was composed entirely of New Jerseyans. It was chaired by the Tenafly schools superintendent, Harry Jaroslaw, and became known as the Jaroslaw Commission.<sup>4</sup> Its charge was to decide how the Boyer topics could be taught to beginning teachers in the alternate route program.

The New Jersey Association of Colleges for Teacher Education - the education deans' group - was not invited to designate a representative to the Jaroslaw Commission.

Twelve of the 21 commission members had already endorsed the alternate route proposal. Other commission members were laypeople whose questions indicated that they were not conversant with the issues.

The Jaroslaw Commission concluded that the Boyer topics could not be communicated adequately to people in the alternate route in the five days which Commissioner Cooperman had allotted in his original proposal. They recommended that this be increased to 20 days before the provisional teaching year began, and be followed by a seminar taken during the year. The Jaroslaw Commission went on to say that the 30 college credits in the subject to be taught could be waived for someone who had "five years of full-time work experience in a professional level job related to the subject to be taught." (Jaroslaw, p. 5) The Commission agreed with Cooperman that alternate route programs could be operated by local school districts without college involvement.

At this point the union opposition to the alternate route began to dissolve. The state AFT president, Marco Lacatena, and his NEA counterpart, Edythe Fulton, had both been on the Jaroslaw Commission. Lacatena issued a dissenting report. Fulton did not, and she voted to have the majority report transmitted to Commissioner Cooperman. Lacatena suspected that the state NEA was positioning itself to make a claim on the academic seminar that alternate route teachers might have to take during their provisional year.

The New Jersey Education Association has an institute for the training of in-service teachers, and the solvency of the institute would be strengthened if NJEA could conduct the seminar for the alternate route teachers. At any rate, Lacatena stepped up his opposition to the alternate route while Fulton ceased to be heard from.

### Challenges to the College Programs

The college teacher certification programs in New Jersey are under the control of the state education commissioner. At the same time that Cooperman's alternate route proposal was being refined through his expert committee arrangement, he set about to alter the college programs.

Cooperman and the chancellor of higher education issued a joint ruling that if an educational foundations course, for example, educational psychology, were taught by an education professor, the professor's vita had to be submitted for review by the New Jersey Departments of Education and Higher Education. If the educational psychology course were taught by someone in a psychology department, no review was needed. (Cooperman and Hollander, December 30, 1983) The discriminatory nature of this demand caused the American Association of University Professors at Rutgers to protest, and Rutgers' president indicated that he would not comply with the demand. The demand was then changed so that the education professor's vita did not have

to be submitted, but instead the professor had to acquire a joint appointment in the counterpart liberal arts department or else have the course cross listed with that department. (Cooperman and Hollander, March 9, 1984) This gave liberal arts departments veto power over faculty and courses offered in the educational foundations area. The president of Rutgers agreed to go along with the new demand, and the AAUP remained silent.

Cooperman and the chancellor also reinterpreted the requirements of the college certification programs. These requirements had been promulgated in 1982 under the previous commissioner, and called for 60 credits of general education, 30 credits in a liberal arts major, 18 credits in the behavioral and social foundations of teaching, and 30 credits in professional education. (The distinction between the last two categories has been elusive and problematic.) Cooperman and the chancellor insisted that the 60 credits of general education and the 30-credit liberal arts major were absolute minima, but the rest of the credits could be reduced without objection so long as the reduction resulted in an addition to the two liberal arts categories. Prospective teachers would be required to take an irreducible minimum of liberal arts credits but not education credits.

In addition to the credit hour requirements for its college certification programs, New Jersey has requirements governing the admission and continuation of students, the

pre-student teaching field experiences, student teaching, and testing. To check compliance with all these requirements, Cooperman issued forms which every college program had to complete. The completed forms were given to a group of out-of-state reviewers. College program officials then met with the reviewers to explain what was on the forms.

Given the number of requirements which had to be satisfied and the interpretational nuances that could be placed on many of these, it was quite possible that a college program would be found wanting in some area. The front page of The Newark Star-Ledger confirmed this with a headline that read "Teacher Training Fails State Test," and with a subheading that said "21 of 26 Colleges Facing Major Cutback in Programs." (Braun, May 29, 1984) The story could have come only from Cooperman's state education department. It discredited the college programs, thereby making the emerging alternate route look more desirable. The story also discredited education professors, who had been the most informed critics of the alternate route. The subsequent acknowledgement by the state education department that many of the college program "failures" had been minor technical - and easily corrected - violations (Braun, May 31, 1984, p. 1) lacked the sensationalism of the original report.

#### Lacatena's Initiatives

With the education professors discredited and

demoralized by Cooperman's regulatory assault, and with the NJEA lying low, the major opponent to the alternate route became Marco Lacatena of the AFT. Lacatena and the AFT published a newsprint booklet which was distributed to 2500 members of the Association for Teacher Education, 735 institutional representatives to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 455 education reporters, the members of the Boyer Panel and Jaroslaw Commission, 619 New Jersey school boards and 510 superintendents, the members of the state legislature, New Jersey's college presidents and faculties, and the members of the State Boards of Education and Higher Education. The booklet contained an overview of events, the text of the Boyer Panel and Jaroslaw Commission reports, reprints of newspaper articles, and letters.

The person who was most activated by the Lacatena booklet was Hendrik Gideonse, the education dean at the University of Cincinnati. He wrote critiques of the Boyer Panel and Jaroslaw Commission reports. Then he came to New Jersey and testified before the State Board of Education.

Gideonse's testimony had to be revised at the last moment. The hearings were scheduled to be on the Jaroslaw report, with the first hearing on June 28, 1984. On June 6, Cooperman issued a 102-page set of proposed changes in the New Jersey Education Code, including changes in the college programs and a detailed specification of how the alternate route would be operated. Two weeks later, Cooperman issued a 111-page revised set of changes, so that this became the last minute focus of the hearings.

Among the many changes Cooperman was proposing was that the state education department would have more direct operational responsibility for the alternate route, with local districts having less control (and the colleges, of course, having no control). Cooperman also wanted to reduce further the education requirements in the college certification programs. The reduction would make the college requirements more similar to the requirements in the alternate route.

The last minute changes, and the voluminousness with which they were presented, made it difficult for members of the State Board of Education to keep up with events. This was the group that would make the final decision, but the issues had become blurred in a welter of technical detail.

To refocus and dramatize the issues, Lacatena persuaded the education deans to hold a conference. This took place in mid-July, and attracted as speakers J. Myron Atkin, dean of education at Stanford; Robert Egbert, chair of the National Commission for Excellence in Teacher Education; and Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers. Penelope Earley of the AACTE was the key person in lining up these speakers.

All three speakers expressed their dismay with New Jersey's alternate route to teacher certification. However, the conference was not well attended, and only one member of the Jaroslaw Commission showed up to defend the commission's report. Other members of the commission who had agreed to

speak withdrew after checking with the state education department. Press coverage of the conference was low. Most depressing of all for those who hoped that the conference would turn events around was the message brought by two state legislators. One of these was the education professor who had been railing against the alternate route proposal for almost a year. The legislators informed the audience that they, too, had finally been persuaded to change their minds. They said that their concerns about the alternate route had been allayed by promises made to them by Cooperman's staff. They left the deans' conference and hurried to the state capitol where a press conference had been arranged for them to announce their new position.

### The Alternate Route and Its Aftermath

On September 5, 1984, the New Jersey State Board of Education unanimously adopted the alternate route to teacher certification. Following are the requirements of the alternate route, as finally adopted, contrasted with the state-mandated requirements for the college certification programs.

| <u>College Programs</u>                                                                                     | <u>Alternate Route</u>                                |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. 60 cr. of general education, to include arts, humanities, math, science, social science, and technology. | 1. Bachelor's but no general education specification. |
| 2. Demonstrated proficiency in English and math.                                                            | 2. Nothing.                                           |

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 3. Minimum grade point average of 2.5 (A=4).                                                                                                                                                                      | 3. Nothing.                                 |
| 4. A major of at least 30 cr. in the subject to be taught (any liberal arts major for elementary and early childhood teaching.                                                                                    | 4. 30 cr. in subject to be taught.          |
| 5. Extensive and progressively developed field work from sophomore through senior year.                                                                                                                           | 5. 20-day practicum.                        |
| 6. In a comprehensive field, a distribution of course work. E.g., in social studies, courses in world history, American history, political science, economics, geography, and sociology or cultural anthropology. | 6. Nothing.                                 |
| 7. College cr. course work in curriculum, student development and learning, the classroom and the school, and physiology and hygiene - to a maximum of 30 cr.                                                     | 7. 200 hours of instruction in these areas. |
| 8. College cr. course work in methods of teaching particular subject, e.g., techniques of social studies instruction.                                                                                             | 8. Nothing.                                 |
| 9. Comprehensive test of subject mastery.                                                                                                                                                                         | 9. Comprehensive test of subj. mastery.     |

10. Full semester of student teaching without pay.      10. One-year internship at full pay.

Each year, Commissioner Cooperman has presented a progress report on the alternate route. According to the 1989 report, the program is endorsed by the National Governors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and President Bush's Education Summit. (The Provisional Teacher Program, 1989, p. 1) By December 1989, more than 5,000 applications to the program had been received, with 1,506 applicants being hired as provisional teachers. This has enabled school districts to fill openings for math and science teachers, and urban districts to cope with a general shortage of teachers. The alternate route teachers score higher on the National Teacher Examination subject tests and general knowledge test than do students in the college education programs. And teachers in the alternate route are not as likely to drop out of teaching in their first year as are teachers who have come through the college programs.

Cooperman's press releases on the alternate route have received favorable treatment in New Jersey's newspapers and in The New York Times. (See, for example, Braun, November 16, 1986, and November 19, 1989; Carmody, 1989; "New Jersey, in 5 Years, Solves Teacher Shortage," 1989; and Saul, 1986.) Cooperman himself has promoted the alternate route through articles in national journals (for example, Cooperman and Klagholz, 1985).

Critical reaction has been muted from the education professors in New Jersey. This may be explained by the fact that enrollment in the college certification programs has increased in recent years due to the national focus on education, and thus the preparation of teachers in New Jersey has not become a zero-sum game. Cooperman's alternate route is attracting more applicants annually, but so are the college programs. Another probable reason for the relative quiescence is that some of the colleges have acquired a role in the alternate route. The academic seminar (200 hours of instruction) which alternate route teachers must take is now offered under college auspices. College faculty also claim that they jeopardize state approval of their own programs if they speak out against the commissioner's program.

Those who continue to examine the alternate route critically have several concerns about it. One concern is that the agency which created and operates the alternate route is also the agency that evaluates it. Cooperman's state education department evaluates Cooperman's program. That constitutes a conflict of interest, and the conflict is compounded by the fact that the state education department also evaluates the college programs.

This situation has produced some questionable comparisons. For example, it is said that the people in the alternate route score higher on the National Teacher Exam than the people in the college programs. However, the test

results are controlled by the state education department, and it can decide whom to count as being in the alternate route. It is also said that alternate route teachers are more likely to finish out their first year than are college prepared teachers. The alternate route teachers have to complete their first, or provisional, year in order to get certified, whereas the college prepared teachers start with that goal already achieved.

A second area of concern is with the kinds of schools that hire alternate route teachers. More than a quarter (400 of 1506) of the alternate route teachers have been in nonpublic schools. (The Provisional Teacher Program, 1989, p. 8) After their provisional year and certification, they can apply for public school positions, and many do. That raises the question of whether private school teaching is appropriate for public school certification.

Of greater concern is the fact that alternate route teachers are used so extensively to staff urban schools. Of the 1106 public school teachers in the alternate route, about a third (369) are accounted for by four urban districts: Newark, East Orange, Camden, and Plainfield. (The Provisional Teacher Program, 1989, p. 8) Commissioner Cooperman has frequently complained about the quality of the teaching in New Jersey's urban schools. Indeed, this complaint was part of his justification for creating the alternate route. Now these schools are the major training sites for alternate route teachers.

Related to the concern about the quality of the on-site training that alternate route teachers receive is the quantity. A 1989 survey of alternate route teachers reveals that 79 percent of them assumed full responsibility for their classes on day one. (Smith, 1990) This is permitted if the alternate route teacher has "teaching experience," a term that is not defined. Urban schools, which in New Jersey are relatively underfunded, may not have the luxury of paying a full salary to an alternate route teacher who begins with part-time work.

Regardless of their prior "teaching experience," alternate route teachers are supposed to be supervised on a regular schedule. The amount of supervision actually received is far below that specified in the state's requirements, and for which the alternate route teachers themselves must pay. For their first four weeks on the job, alternate route teachers are supervised for only 15 percent of the time specified by the state. (Smith, 1990, p. 5) These survey findings are of the same order and magnitude as those that were gathered by the New Jersey Education Association in the first year of the alternate route. (NJEA, 1986) It is widely known, and has been since the first year, that a key component of the alternate route program - supervision - is well below the amount prescribed. This is not mentioned in Commissioner Cooperman's annual progress reports.

Again, poor schools may lack the personnel to provide

the specified amount of supervision, but it is precisely these schools that are most dependent on alternate route teachers. Effective state monitoring of this is almost impossible because of the way the system is designed. From 1985 to 1989, 225 public school districts and 259 nonpublic schools had alternate route teachers. (The Provisional Teacher Program, 1989, p. 8) The sheer number of schools involved each year augurs against field inspection. Even so, the New Jersey Education Association and an independent researcher were both able to find evidence of wholesale disregard of the supervision requirements. The Council for Basic Education, in its examination of the alternate route program, got a sufficient sense of this situation to recommend that "the state monitor the school support teams more closely, and that districts be required to provide resources for schools hiring provisional candidates so that those schools can, in turn, provide adequate support for the provisional teachers." (Gray and Lynn, 1988, p. 16)

The academic seminar which alternate route teachers take is another area of concern. The Boyer Panel recommended, and logistics dictate, that the instruction in this seminar be generic. If there are 12 alternate route teachers in one location in New Jersey, and if these teachers are scattered among grade levels and subject fields, it is infeasible to have anything but generic instruction. Problems peculiar to mathematics teaching or science teaching or elementary school teaching are ignored

in the focus on teaching in general. The state even recommends that this instruction be carried out by an "education generalist." (The Provisional Teacher Program, 1985) Grade- and subject-specific instruction is thus left to supervisors at the teaching site. Even if the supervision were occurring, it would have to be by people who have kept abreast of developments in their teaching specialties. There are now hundreds of public schools and hundreds of nonpublic schools with alternate route teachers, and no evidence whatsoever that the supervision which is not occurring would be good if it were occurring.

Added to this is the problem of when the academic seminar is held. Eighty hours of it are supposed to take place before the alternate route teacher begins the provisional teaching year, with the remaining 120 hours taken in evening or weekend sessions. However, more than half of the alternate route teachers are hired at the beginning of the school year or after the year has already begun (The Provisional Teacher Program, 1989, p. 7), so they have no academic preparation when they start.

Again, schools that depend on alternate route teachers often do so because they still have staff vacancies at the onset of the school year. These tend to be the poorest schools. The alternate route teachers in these schools not only have difficult teaching situations and a lack of supervision, but they must complete the full 200 hours of the academic seminar during the school year. This may

explain the finding of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association. The PSA surveyed the principals who had alternate route teachers in their schools. Forty-five percent of them reported that there was too much stress on the alternate route teachers and too little preparation time. ("Confidential PSA Survey," 1986)

An accommodation that has been made to this situation is that the academic seminar itself has no pupil performance requirements. The alternate route teachers must demonstrate attendance at the seminar, but nothing more is expected.

#### An Uncertain Future

New Jersey's alternate route has suddenly become endangered, at least in its present form. In January 1990, the Republican Tom Kean was succeeded as governor by the Democrat Jim Florio. Soon thereafter Saul Cooperman became aware that the Florio administration was considering other people for the commissioner's job, and he announced his resignation, effective in June. Following upon Cooperman's resignation, the chancellor of higher education announced that he too would be leaving by the summer. The ranking officials who had made the alternate route a reality, and who evinced considerable antipathy to schools of education, were gone or going.

In the meantime, there has arisen a fresh skepticism about alternate routes to teaching, and about New Jersey's route in particular. In December 1989, Arthur Wise,

director of the RAND corporation's Center for the Study of the Teaching Profession, challenged the idea of allowing amateurs to teach. He was responding to remarks Cooperman made at a conference on alternate routes sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. ("Alternate Certification for Teachers Is Examined," 1989) The RAND Corporation had earlier completed a study of alternate routes and found that those like New Jersey's, which entail the least preparation and supervision, are the least well-rated by the recruits. (Darling-Hammond and Wise, 1989)

The departure of Kean and Cooperman may embolden people who claim to know of horror stories in the alternate route to go public with their evidence. If the new state administration signals its displeasure with the alternate route, criticism of the route will be registered with felt impunity and may even become fashionable. Until the time of this writing, people with tales to tell have justified their reticence by referring to Cooperman's reputation for vindictiveness. They had their own school or school district or school of education to protect. It can also be expected that the new education commissioner will have staffers scrutinize and report on the alternate route more carefully than Cooperman did.

There may, however, be a reluctance to throw the infant alternate route out with the bathwater. It has become a mechanism for staffing urban schools, and if it is abandoned, something else will have to be found. To

Cooperman's credit, the alternate route has brought some very capable and mature people into teaching. It is unreasonable to expect such people to forego an income and pay tuition and undergo full-time protracted study toward a teaching certificate. Between what Cooperman has demanded of these people and what might be ideal in a resource-rich world, there is a lot of ground on which to fashion a compromise. The compromise should be worked out by all the major players to avoid the unnecessary wrangling which Cooperman provoked when he excluded teacher educators.

#### Conclusions

There are important elements of this episode which are not yet known and about which conclusions cannot be drawn. For example, the relationship between the governor and his education commissioner has been the subject of speculation and conflicting rumors. Some people are convinced that Tom Kean pulled the strings and Saul Cooperman did as he was told, even against his better judgment. Others believe that Cooperman considered himself above the breed of career schoolpeople from whose ranks he came and was bent on showing New Jersey's business and academic leaders that he could distance himself from that herd. The truth may never be known, or there may be multiple truths to confirm the multiple rumors. Was it really Kean's alternate route or was it really Cooperman's?

It is known now that education became highly

politicized during the 1980's. Governors vied to be known as education governors. Shifting education to the political realm, that is, to the arena of professional politicians, meant debasing its substance with public relations ploys and slogans. Oversimplifications abounded during the start-up period for the alternate route. On the other hand, this politicization of education did catch the public's interest and made teaching seem like an important career to people who had not thought so before. A lot of these people have become teachers.

The alternate route struggle in New Jersey is also a lesson in the uses of power. The governor had the power to punish and reward. The punishment might be the withholding of a potential reward. Rutgers, the state university, underwent enormous growth during the Kean administration. For the president of Rutgers, the prospect of this growth could well have made his endorsement of the alternate route seem like a wise tradeoff. That the president was not that enamored of the alternate route became known later when he sent a confidential letter to Cooperman warning that the alternate route was a "grave mistake." (Bloustein, 1984)

The governor and the commissioner were consistent newsmakers, so they could command press attention whenever they wanted it. Moreover, by favoring certain reporters with leaks, they could guarantee a degree of press support for their actions. Their opponents, the education professors and teacher unions, were not as reliable

newsmakers. They were offering the status quo, which was not news, or else they were reacting to the initiatives of the governor and commissioner, in which case their reactions would be quoted at the end of articles about the governor and commissioner.

Another conclusion that was made obvious by events is that education professors have few allies. Their liberal arts colleagues would not rally to their defense even against the meretriciousness of the original alternate route proposal. Education school bashing is so time-honored a pastime in academia that it is almost a reflex action among people who pride themselves for objectivity.

Thus, the college certification programs were easy targets. Everyone knew that these were supposed to be of low quality, and that perception was impossible to overcome. It may even have been heightened by the anger with which the education professoriate responded to Cooperman's animadversions, as though they were protesting too much.

## ENDNOTES

1. In time, special education was dropped from the proposal because of protests by advocacy groups that its inclusion defied reason. Early childhood education was added explicitly to the proposal a year later, after being treated implicitly as though it was indistinguishable from elementary education. On January 7, 1990, Cooperman finally succeeded in having early childhood and elementary education combined into a single N-8 certification program.
2. Cooperman told a group of education deans in his office on January 24, 1984 that Governor Kean had directed him to develop the proposal in-house and keep it secret until its formal announcement. The secrecy was such that not even the State Board of Examiners was consulted on the proposal. This board traditionally served as a recommending body for changes in certification requirements, and was comprised of an assistant commissioner, two state college presidents, one county superintendent, two district superintendents, a high school principal, an elementary school principal, a librarian, and four teachers. However, in the month preceding the announcement, business and civic leaders were given private briefings on the proposal. Several of these leaders endorsed the proposal immediately upon its issuance.
3. During the late spring and the summer of 1984, this writer contacted the members of the Boyer Panel to get their reaction to the alternate route proposal as it was taking final form. All the members said that they felt bound by the promise they had made to Cooperman to avoid becoming embroiled in the debate.
4. Other members of the Jaroslaw Commission were: Robert Marik, vice president for public affairs at Merck Pharmaceuticals; Jann Azumi, a researcher for the Newark Public Schools; Harold Eickhoff, the president of Trenton State College and the first state college president who had endorsed the proposal; Frank Esposito, dean of education at Kean College and a member of the Kean gubernatorial campaign; Laurie Fitchett, president of the New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers; Edythe Fulton, president of the New Jersey Education Association; Bernard Kirshtein, president of the New Jersey School Boards Association; Beth Kitchen, owner of Kitchen & Associates Architectural Services; Marco Lacatena, President of the New Jersey State Federation of Teachers; Clark Leslie, vice president for operations at Ethicon Pharmaceuticals; Monsignor Thomas Leubking, superintendent of the Trenton Diocesan Schools; Allan Markowitz, a supervisor with the Parsippany-Troy Hills Public Schools; Thomas

Niland, principal of Pomona Elementary School; Murray Peyton, board secretary to the Dunellen Public Schools; Verdell Roundtree, vice president of the United Negro College Fund; Mark Smith, superintendent of the Chatham Borough Public Schools; James Van Hoven, president of the Independent and Private Schools Association; Helen Walsh, president of Worthington, Walsh & Dryer; William Walsh, president of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; and Edward Watts, president of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association.

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